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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/824,080	04/02/2001	Johannes-Jorg Rueger	10744/1400	8506

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EXAMINER

NGHIEM, MICHAEL P

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2863

DATE MAILED: 02/20/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/824,080

Applicant(s)

RUEGER ET AL.

Examiner

Michael P Nghiem

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 16 January 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-9 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 3,4 and 7-9 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 2,5 and 6 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- 1) ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - 2) ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - 3) ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

The Amendment filed on January 16, 2004 has been acknowledged.

Withdrawal of Allowability

1. The indicated allowability of claim 1 is withdrawn in view of the reference(s) to Hoffman et al. (DE 196 52 807). Rejections based on the newly cited reference(s) follow.

Specification

2. The specification is objected to as failing to provide proper antecedent basis for the claimed subject matter. See 37 CFR 1.75(d)(1) and MPEP § 608.01(o). Correction of the following is required: Claim 9, "... wherein an offset is stored as long as a corresponding position of the piezoelectric elements (10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60) is not used" is not described in the specification.

Claim Objections

3. Claims 5 and 6 are objected to because of the following informalities:

- "the offset" lacks antecedent basis.

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Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

4. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless --

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Hoffmann et al. (DE 196 52 807).

Hoffmann et al. discloses all the claimed features of the invention including:

- method (Figs. 2, 3) for controlling a voltage (U_c) applied to a piezoelectric element (C) within a circuit (Fig. 2) for charging and discharging the piezoelectric element (Abstract, lines 2-3), comprising:
 - modifying a target voltage for the voltage applied to a piezoelectric element (by controlling charging period, Abstract, lines 5-8), in view of at least one systematic error (driving period corrected depending on previous charging time and period, Title, lines 3-5) occurring during a first control procedure of the voltage applied to the piezoelectric element (drive

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process to predefined voltage, Abstract, line 2) to obtain a target voltage for a second and/or a further control of the voltage applied to the piezoelectric element (subsequent drive process, control charging voltage by controlling charging period, Abstract, lines 5-8).

Allowable Subject Matter

5. Claim 2 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

6. Claims 5 and 6 would be allowable if rewritten or amended to overcome the objection(s) set forth in this Office action.

7. Claims 3, 4, and 7-9 are allowed.

Reasons For Allowance

8. The method as claimed wherein the measured value is compared to the predefined target value by comparison means (claim 2) or re-measuring the system parameter after the modification procedure is terminated (claim 3) or determining/storing an offset (to a target voltage) (claims 4-9) is not disclosed, suggested, or made obvious by the prior art of record.

Response to Arguments


9. Applicant's arguments have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Contact Information

10. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Michael Nghiem whose telephone number is (571) 272-2272. The examiner can normally be reached on M-H from 6:30AM – 5:00 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John Barlow can be reached at (571) 272-2269. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703) 872-9306.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0956.


MICHAEL NGHIEM
PRIMARY EXAMINER

Michael Nghiem

February 17, 2004